

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/963,674
Amendment filed **December 16, 2004**
Reply to OA dated September 17, 2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 2 without prejudice or disclaimer. Please amend claims 1, 3 and 5, and add new claim 15, as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A highly weather-resistant magnet powder comprising iron and a rare-earth element,

wherein said magnet powder is an alloy powder selected from the group consisting of Nd-Fe-B and Sm-Fe-N;

wherein particles of said magnet powder comprise uniform coating with a phosphate film to a thickness of 5 to 100 nm on the average; and

wherein said particles of said magnet powder are prepared by crushing an alloy magnet powder in an organic solvent having added thereto phosphoric acid.

Claim 2 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Currently amended): The highly weather-resistant magnet powder according to Claim 2 1, wherein the particles of said Sm-Fe-N alloy powder are uniformly coated with a zinc film before being coated with said phosphate film.

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Claim 4 (Previously presented): The highly weather-resistant magnet powder according to Claim 1, wherein said phosphate coating film is a composite composed of iron phosphate and another phosphate and comprises iron phosphate in an Fe/rare earth element atomic ratio of 8 or more.

Claim 5 (Currently amended): A resin composition for bonded magnets, comprising, as the ingredient present in the largest amount by weight, a highly weather-resistant magnet powder comprising a rare-earth element, wherein particles of said magnet powder comprise uniform coating with a phosphate film to a thickness of 5 to 100 nm on the average; and

wherein said particles of said magnet powder are prepared by crushing an alloy magnet powder in an organic solvent having added thereto phosphoric acid.

Claim 6 (Previously presented): The resin composition for bonded magnets according to Claim 5, wherein said magnet powder comprising a rare earth element is an alloy powder selected from the group consisting of Nd-Fe-B and Sm-Fe-N powder.

Claim 7 (Previously presented): The resin composition for bonded magnets according to Claim 6, wherein the particles of said Sm-Fe-N alloy powder are uniformly coated with a zinc film before being coated with said phosphate film.

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Claim 8 (Previously presented): The resin composition for bonded magnets according to Claim 5, wherein said phosphate coating film is a composite composed of iron phosphate and another phosphate and comprises iron phosphate in an Fe/rare earth element atomic ratio of 8 or more.

Claim 9 (Original): The highly weather-resistant iron-based magnet powder according to claim 1, wherein the magnet powder is formed as a compacted magnet by compacting the highly weather-resistant magnet powder to an apparent density of 85% or more of the intrinsic density.

Claim 10 (Previously presented): The highly weather-resistant iron-based magnet powder according to claim 4, wherein the magnet powder is formed as a compacted magnet by compacting the highly weather-resistant magnet powder to an apparent density of 85% or more of the intrinsic density.

Claims 11 and 12 (Canceled).

Claim 13 (Previously presented): The resin composition for bonded magnets according to claim 5, wherein the resin composition is formed as a bonded magnet.

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Claim 14 (Previously presented): The resin composition for bonded magnets according to claim 8, wherein the resin composition is formed as a bonded magnet.

Claim 15 (New): The highly weather-resistant magnet powder according to Claim 1, wherein said magnet powder is coated with the phosphate film over 80% or more of the surfaces of the magnet powder.